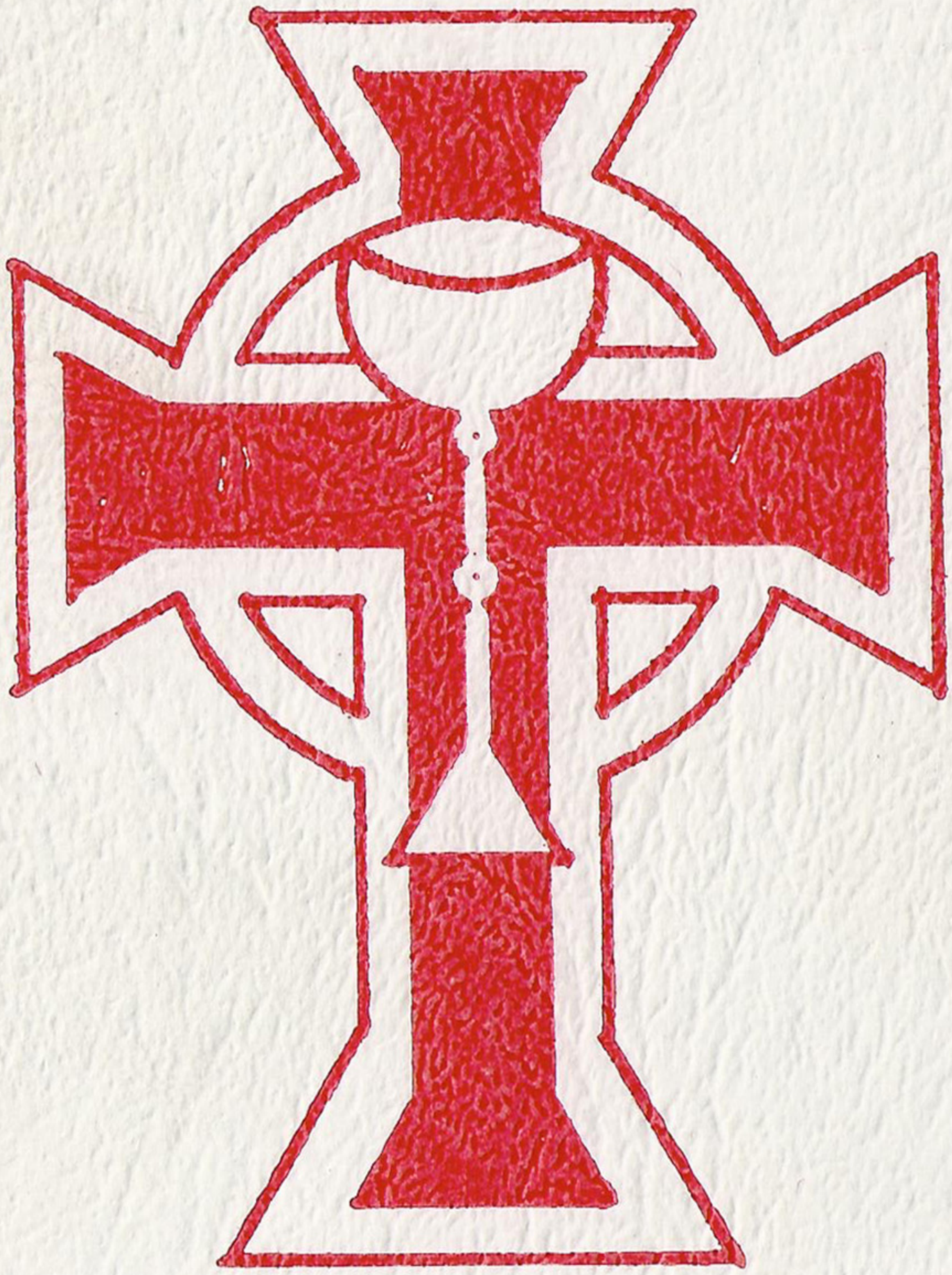
THE CARE OF THE ALTAR

An Orderly Procedure with Prayers



DIOCESAN ALTAR GUILD

OF MICHIGAN

✠

Compiled By

MARION RIEMER

FOREWORD

The Church owes much to the faithful women who serve on the parish and mission Altar Guilds. In order to assist them in their work Mrs. Riemer has prepared this small booklet. I commend it to the Altar Guilds of the diocese, because, while it recognizes the fine diversity and variety that should exist in our churches, it also seeks to undergird that variety with common standards; and because it recognizes, in its stress on prayer, that belonging to an Altar Guild is a Means of Grace. An Altar Guild exists for service and for holiness.

✠ RICHARD S. EMRICH,

Bishop of Michigan

A DIOCESAN ALTAR GUILD PRAYER

O God, most holy and most glorious, who has called us to the service of Thy sanctuary, grant to the Clergy of this Diocese devotion, purity of heart, joy in their work and in all things the guidance of Thy Holy Spirit; and give to us and all who are appointed to care for those things which pertain to Thy worship the spirit of reverence and a thankful sense of our privilege. Bind us all together in a sincere affection for Thy Church and grant that we may ever find a place in Thy Temple both in this life and the life to come, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. —Amen.

THE DIOCESAN ALTAR GUILD'S IDEAL

1. Every Altar in the Diocese suitably and adequately equipped.
2. Every Parish and Mission in the Diocese with a well trained and efficient Altar Guild, whose members are growing in Grace.
3. Every Parish and Mission Altar Guild a member of the Diocesan Altar Guild.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Bishop of the Diocese of Michigan

THE RT. REV. RICHARD S. EMRICH

SUFRAGAN BISHOPS

THE RT. REV. ARCHIE CROWLEY

THE RT. REV. ROBERT L. De WITT

ARCHDEACON

THE VENERABLE CHARLES D. BRAIDWOOD

CHAPLAIN

THE REVEREND JOHN G. DAHL

OFFICERS

Honorary President . The Rt. Rev. Richard S. Emrich

President . . . Mrs. Herbert G. Riemer

Vice President . . . . Mrs. Allen J. Grey

Recording Secretary. . Mrs. Ronald Hankinson

Corresponding Secretary . Mrs. Abraham Dennis

Treasurer . . . . Mrs. Donald A. Baird

ECCLESIASTICAL SEWING COMMITTEE

Silk . . . . Mrs. David R. Alexander

Linens . . . . . Mrs. Walter W. Earl

LENDING CUPBOARD

Chairman . . . . Mrs. M. G. McCall

COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman . . . . Mrs. E. J. Torrence

PROGRAM

Chairman . . . Mrs. Gordon C. Ripley

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairman . . . . Mrs. Carl H. Zuber

THE CARE OF THE ALTAR

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Reverence in all things is the word for conduct in our work.
2. Always allow plenty of time to do Altar work without hurrying.
3. Begin and end all work in the Church with prayer.
4. Proper attire is desirable in our work. Smocks to cover dresses and small chapel caps of the same color as the smock are ideal.
5. Do not put anything upon the Altar itself except those things that are proper, the Missal, the Eucharistic Vessels, Cross, Candlestick and Vases.
6. When possible arrange the flowers the day before the service. Never leave empty vases or wilted flowers on the Altar.
7. Do no talking in the Sanctuary unless and except when necessary, and then only in low tones.
8. No person but an Altar Guild Worker is to do Altar work, if a member is unable to do her work she is to notify the Directress.
9. The Altar Guild exists to carry out the Rector's orders and the members should always do so cheerfully and willingly.

ON ENTERING CHURCH TO BEGIN WORK

For the greater glory of Thy Holy Name I approach this work. May it be acceptable in Thy sight, and begun, continued, and ended in Thee.

HOW TO CARE FOR THE CANDLES

1. The wax savers should be cleaned each time they are put on fresh candles.
2. Before putting new candles in the Church, they

should be burned until they are sealed to the tops of the wax savers.

3. Do not remove the burned part of the wick as it will make it difficult for the acolytes to light the candles.
4. See that the candles are straight in the holders and that the wick does not lean on the candle.
5. If bees wax candles are used they should be shined with a cloth until lustre is produced before placing them in the holders.

PRAYER & MEDITATIONS FOR ALTAR GUILD WORK

Almighty God, grant we beseech Thee, that we may handle Holy things with reverence and perform our work with such faithfulness and devotion that it may be acceptable to Thee and obtain Thy blessings, through Christ our Lord. —*Amen.*

ACTUAL WORK OF PREPARING FOR SERVICE

1. Vacuum or sweep carpet in the Sanctuary as necessary.
2. Dust everything within the Communion Rail, and the Lectern and Pulpit.
3. Remove dust covers from the Altar and Credence Table.
4. Consult the calendar for the proper color of the day, if the color of the day changes and requires a different set of hangings on the Altar, Pulpit, and Lectern then:
   a. Hang the Fair Linen over the Altar Rail lengthways so as not to fold or wrinkle it.
   b. Remove Frontal, put it away carefully in the proper place.

c. Take out proper Frontal and place it on the Altar, then replace the Fair Linen being sure the ends hang evenly.

d. Remove Pulpit Hangings and Lectern Fall and book markers and replace with those of proper color.

5. See that the candles are in their proper places, about three inches from the ends of the Altar and that they are long enough and in good condition.

6. See that Alms Basins are in proper places.

7. See that there is a long enough taper in the candle lighters and that there are plenty of matches handy.

FOR HOLY COMMUNION

THE ALTAR AND CREDENCE TABLE

1. Move the Missal and Missal stand from the cupbord to the Epistle end of the Altar, placing the front edge parallel with the front edge of the Altar, three inches back from Altar front and three inches from the Epistle side of Altar. Mark Missal for prayer, Collect, Epistle and Gospel for the day.

2. To prepare Credence Table:

a. Place Credence cloth having it properly centered.

b. Fill cruet with wine and place on right side of Credence Table to the back with handle to the wall.

c. Fill water cruet and place to the left of the wine cruet with the handle toward the wall, do not fill the cruets so full that they are apt to spill.

d. See that there are plenty of Hosts in the bread box, place on Credence Table in front of wine cruet.

e. The Lavabo Bowl should be placed on the left

side of Credence Table with the Lavabo towel between the bowl and bread box.

3. For celebrations where no offering is presented see that at least one alms basin is on the rail in front of the first pew.

ON PREPARING ALTAR VESSELS

Grant me, O Blessed Lord, in all things that surround the sacred mysteries of the Altar, the reverence which comes from a loving and penitent heart.

THE CHALICE AND PATEN

To prepare the Chalice:

1. Spread Linen Towel on shelf.
2. Place Chalice with Cross toward you, cover top with folded Purificator, then place the Paten with priest's Host, (if used) in center, then place Pall on top, cover all with silk Veil to match the color of the hangings. Put Burse on top of Veil, see that the Burse contains a Corporal and an extra Purificator.

PREPARING VESTMENTS

Grant to the Priest, who shall wear these robes, Purity of Heart, true Reverence and Loving Zeal for the souls committeed to His charge.

THE VESTMENTS

Lay out Surplice and Stole of the proper color, for the Celebrant.

If Eucharistic Vestments are used:

1. Cover table with white cloth on which to lay vestments.
2. Lay Chausable on table, front down.
3. Place Maniple on Chausable. Form letter I.

4. Then properly colored Stole. Form Letter H.
5. Then Girdle, form the letter S.
6. Lay Alb on top of these with front down. Make sure that the Alb is unfastened at neckline, fold Alb up from hem so that all is on the table. Then place Amice on top with collar up, strings crossed over Amice. Thus: X.
7. Then cover Vestments.

FOR MORNING PRAYER

1. Mark the Lessons for the day in the Lectern Bible.
2. See that the offering plates are in their proper places and that the alms basin is in its proper place.
3. See that the Tippet and a fresh Surplice is hung out for the Priest in charge.

CARE OF ALTAR AFTER SERVICES

1. Replace dust covers on the Altar and Credence.
2. Remove flowers and empty vases and put vases away.
   a. Prepare flowers to be taken to the sick if this custom is carried out in your parish.
3. Check whether clergy vestments need to be laundered or cleaned or pressed; check for used or soiled Altar linens. Be sure that all Altar linens are laundered and vestments are in good condition before they are needed again.

AFTER HOLY COMMUNION

1. Clear Credence Table.
2. Return Missal to cupboard.

WHEN CLEANSING ALTAR VESSELS

Paten—

May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my body and soul to everlasting life.

Chalice—

May the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my body and soul unto everlasting life.

Grant to thy whole church unity, peace and concord.

3. Rinse Chalice and Paten with cold water, pour water down Piscina (if there is no Piscina, pour water on the ground.)

   The Chalice and Paten should then be thoroughly cleansed and wiped dry with a soft cloth, (towels for this purpose only are ideal), and put away in their cases.

4. Used linens should be rinsed with cold water and this water poured down Piscina or on ground.
5. Empty water cruet down Piscina or on ground and dry cruet.
6. Empty wine cruet, rinse with clean water and dry. Put these away in proper place.
7. Place Lavabo and Bread Box in proper place.

HOLY BAPTISM

1. Se that the Font, Ewer and all articles to be used for the service are in good condition.
2. Fill the Ewer with warm water, place a towel on the edge of the Font after the cover has been removed. Place a Prayer Book marked at the service near at hand for the Priest. Place extra Prayer Books nearby for the sponsors. After the service pour the water down the Piscina or on the ground and cover the Font.

CONFIRMATION

Assist with veils if necessary; see that the veils are in good condition. Press if necessary. White or Red is the color for the service.

ORDINATION

Use either White or Red Frontal, Burse, Veil, (if there be such) and Stoles.

WEDDINGS

White is used for weddings, with great tact assist the florist in decorating the church.

FUNERALS

See that the flowers are suitably placed. The coffin is placed in the aisle of the NAVE before the Chancel steps with the foot toward the Altar, the "East".
Offer the use of the Funeral Pall (if there be such). If a Funeral Pall is used, no flowers should be placed on it.

PRAYER AFTER WORK IS FINISHED

O God, bless and accept the work of my hands and all who minister to Thee in the care and adornment of Thy Sanctuary. Bless and hallow them who love the beauty of Thy House, that Thy Holy Name may be glorified; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. —*Amen.*

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

To remove wine stains use cold water and let the linens soak a short time, then wash in mild soap. Lemon juice and salt are a safe bleach. Do not use commercial bleaches on Altar linens.

To remove wax from linen, use cold water and rub gently.

To remove wax from carpet, scrape, then place blotting paper or brown paper over the spot and press with hot iron.